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10 December 1952

To: Chief, SR/3

From: SR/3-W2

Subject: Contact with CASSOWARY 2 on 1-2 December 1952 - Operational

Present at the Conference were CASSOWARIES 2 and 15, and
[] and [], SR/3

Ref: MINI 1232 (IN 16995)
DIR 30293 (OUT 72300)

1. CASSOWARY 2 was contacted on 1 and 2 December at the Statler Hotel in Washington since his answer was required to the message forwarded by ~~HRUZIN~~ through MAK.

2. Although CASSOWARY 2 knew that the message was from HRUZIN he did not know its contents so that when he did read it, his face lit up, he blinked, snapped his fingers and exclaimed: "There we are!" It was evident that he was more than pleased since here was news that his good friends, HRUZIN and ~~KOVAL~~ were still alive and, at the same time, the possibility presented itself for advancing the "Ukrainian cause". Generally speaking, CASSOWARY 15's reaction to the message was pretty much like CASSOWARY 2's.

3. CASSOWARY 2's question: "Well, what are you going to do?", was answered rather pessimistically by saying that although we would like very much to pick up KOVAL, technically - and particularly this time of year - there is a very, very small chance of doing so. However, before an intelligent judgment could be made by our technical people, they would have to obtain ~~the form of~~ area situation reports, and all the other technical aspects surrounding this operation. It, therefore, became necessary to write HRUZIN a note asking him to elucidate a little more on the operation and to attempt to discover whether this was actually HRUZIN or whether it was the MGB we were corresponding with.

4. Although logically CASSOWARY 2 saw the technical difficulties of such an operation he almost refused to believe that it was impossible to accomplish. Eventually he accepted as inevitable that the judgment as to the feasibility of this operation would be up to the technical people; he, however, refused to accept as valid the reasoning that political repercussions in the event of an unforeseen catastrophe could be used as one criterion in determining whether such an operation

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should be undertaken. The repercussions on the resistance movement, in the event of failure, he did consider as an extremely important factor, but here he placed the responsibility squarely on the people "inside", as is evident from his message; he felt, however, that this operation was thoroughly discussed by the underground and all the factors were seriously considered and weighed.

5. It is interesting to note that CASSOWARY 2 refused to accept the possibility that HRUZIN may have been "broken", and feels that if such were the case, the entire resistance movement could be written off the books. He considers HRUZIN's being "doubled" as completely out of the question, and if he were captured then he would be only partially "broken". In substantiation of this, CASSOWARY 2 mentioned a number of underground leaders who had been captured in the last seven or eight years and who had been in MGB jails since that time but who, he claims, even to this day have not been completely broken because if they had been then their "confessions" would have appeared in the press and they would either have been executed or "forgiven" and assigned "good positions" in order to assure the people in the underground that they too would be "forgiven" if they gave themselves up.

6. By the following morning, 2 December, the enormity of the operation registered completely with CASSOWARY 2 so that he was quite subdued and appeared to be somewhat worried. He evolved what to him appeared to be a completely pessimistic cable to HRUZIN. All the suppressed enthusiasm of the previous night was gone and all the technical "flaps" of previous operations apparently filled him with misgivings. Despite this, however, he expressed, with a fervent hope, that this operation would not be shelved by some "desk" but that the situation be brought to the attention of and be decided by "important people". Besides this, he wished to go on record as saying that he "trusted" that the operation will be planned to the very last detail, or (the rest was left unsaid, implying complete despair).

7. The Case Officers made no commitments regarding the operation but stressed that the decision lay in the hands of the technical people and the highest echelons of the U.S. Government. It is believed that if the operation is scrapped the repercussions on the CASSOWARY-CIA relations will not be fatal but will possibly be as serious as the LANDSBERG Project fiasco. (At a later meeting between [] and CASSOWARY 15, the latter mentioned that the British "would be willing to undertake this operation". This, however, is not considered a serious threat but merely a confirmation that the CASSOWARIES probably speculated on such a possibility).

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